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THE COORDINATED EDUCATION CENTER

A joint undertaking
of the University of Pittsburgh
and the Pittsburgh Public School System

IV-4

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education

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Content

	Page
The Rationale	1
The Opportunity	4
What Has Been Done	10
What Has To Be Developed	14
Resources Committed	17

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The Rationale

The University of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Public School System have established a Coordinated Education Center for research, experimentation and demonstration of superior educational content and setting throughout the continuum from elementary schools to graduate schools. The objective, in establishing the Center, has been to encourage action by schools, colleges and universities to meet the extraordinary challenge that now faces education.

The program described and projected herein is based upon certain convictions about the nature and needs of formal education in a free society today. The rationale of the program can be summarized as follows:

1. The unique purposes of formal education are development of the mind and promotion of intellectual inquiry. These purposes, principal responsibility for which distinguishes the educational system from other institutions of society, should characterize formal education from the primary grades through graduate studies.

2. The objective shared by institutions throughout the continuum of education, therefore, is to enable young people to achieve their maximum self-development as persons and to acquire the highest professional or specialized competence of which each of them is capable.

3. The challenge facing modern education is the product largely of an unprecedentedly rapid expansion of human knowledge, an explosion of population and a revolution in technology and energy resources. And this challenge, as manifest both in problems to be

met and opportunities to be seized, impells us not merely to refine but to do violence to traditional institutional patterns, policies and practices in education.

4. The response to the challenge must be made in two broad areas: (a) curriculum content, or the integration of knowledge into a coherent continuum of learning experiences culled from an ever expanding body of human knowledge; and (b) institutional setting, or the manipulation of such factors as time, space, tools, numbers and personnel for maximum educational advantage. Gaps and duplications in preparation must be eliminated, for instance, independent learning fostered and students motivated to progress as rapidly as their differing talents permit. Finite physical and personnel resources must be deployed imaginatively in order to make the most effective use of limited time to meet the needs of growing numbers of students. Technological advances must be adapted to education, teaching and administrative personnel trained in their use, and obsolete, restrictive regulations abolished. And the response, even in experimental stages, must be made with awareness of the mundane problems of viability.

5. The task of educational institutions, in responding to the challenge, can be undertaken with substantial hope of success only through collaboration. Each institution can do its own best possible job only if its efforts are coordinated with those of other institutions at its own and at other levels of the educational system within a fairly extensive region. And although all educational institutions at all levels share fully in the responsibility, the largest university and the largest school system in the metropolitan center of a region

have a special responsibility to exercise a degree of leadership.

6. The prime requisite, then, is a climate or attitude favorable for cooperation among institutions sharing in the common enterprise of providing a continuum of learning experience, together with a readiness or commitment to act boldly and vigorously. The degree of commitment necessarily will vary among the diverse institutions within a region, but it should be intense at the center and sufficiently extensive to generate interest and receptivity throughout the region.

In accordance with this rationale, the University of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Public School System have recognized the challenge, have agreed to collaborate closely and have established cooperative relationships with other schools, colleges and universities throughout the Upper Ohio Valley Region. The favorable climate or attitude has been created and the commitment to act has been made. A Coordinated Education Center has been established as the instrument with which to exploit the extraordinary opportunity thus afforded.

The University of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Public School System propose now to conduct vigorously the modest action program already underway and, simultaneously, to develop the specific components of a much more comprehensive program of research, experimentation and demonstration aimed at improving continuity and quality throughout the educational continuum.

The Opportunity

The opportunity, which this program would exploit, has been evolved over the past two years.

Late in 1957, the University of Pittsburgh initiated a Regional Commission on Educational Coordination,* to promote cooperation among schools, colleges and universities. The Commission's members are the present and immediate past superintendents of the Pittsburgh Public School System, the Allegheny County superintendent of schools, the superintendent of a large suburban school district (Mt. Lebanon), the assistant superintendent of a medium size city school system (Erie), the president of a private preparatory school (Shady Side Academy), the director of the Tri-State Area School Study Council, the presidents of a co-educational (Wooster), a men's (Washington and Jefferson) and a Catholic women's (Seton Hill) liberal arts college, the president of a state university (West Virginia), and a trustee, two vice chancellors and the dean of the School of Education of the University of Pittsburgh.

The Commission first conducted, in 1958, a series of five symposia in which community leaders discussed the needs for education as they saw them from their diverse vantage points in society. More than 80 distinguished persons from law and government, industry and finance, medicine and scientific research, and other professional, civic, religious and cultural fields participated. The transcripts

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* Originally entitled Regional Commission on Interrelationships of Secondary Schools, Colleges and Professional Schools.

of their discussions and recommendations were published under the title, "Today's Leaders Look at Tomorrow's Learning," as resource papers for educators. A summary pamphlet version with the same title was published for wider distribution to parents associations, school board members and other persons interested in education.

The second phase of the Commission's activity was to mobilize about 500 teachers, counselors and administrators from eight universities, 25 colleges and more than 50 schools or school districts into a network of 22 panels (see chart on Page 8.) Each panel focuses upon preparation for careers in a particular professional field or for advanced work in a particular academic area, and each panel includes in its membership persons from the several levels of the educational system. The panels are examining the entire educational continuum and developing recommendations that reflect the consensus of persons at all levels as to what can and should be done to improve quality and continuity of learning. The many full panel meetings and even more numerous study group meetings have meant an enormous investment of time and talent as well as a considerable financial contribution by the participating persons and their institutions. Except for lunches and some overhead costs, this contribution has been uncompensated.

The panel phase is intended to make its impact in three ways. Through widespread participation, a significantly large number of educators have been encouraged to think in terms of the educational continuum and to develop a proprietary interest in

seeing adopted the recommendations they have helped to develop. The panel reports and a synthesis by the Commission are to be published and distributed in the next few months. And the recommendations are being channeled into the Coordinated Education Center for refinement and development, experimentation and demonstration, thence to be channeled out to all the region's educational institutions (see chart on Page 9.)

Establishment of the Coordinated Education Center in Pittsburgh thus has been a natural outgrowth of the Commission's activity in the region. The University of Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Public School System more than a year ago agreed in principle to set up and jointly operate the Center. Arrangements were worked out by a joint committee chaired by William H. Rea, a member of both the Pittsburgh Board of Education and the University's Board of Trustees. The Center was formally established and the nucleus of a staff was appointed this Fall. A grant of $40,000 from the Buhl Foundation, which earlier granted $25,000 for the Commission, has enabled the Center to get into operation. The Buhl grants have been supplemented by others for specific projects.

The Center, as the agency through which the Pittsburgh Schools and the University coordinate their efforts, now has affiliated with it the following:

Frick Elementary School, a large, public, K-8 school, with a heterogeneous student population.

Falk Laboratory School, a small, university-affiliated, K-8 school, with a student body of superior academic ability.

Schenley High School, a large, public, comprehensive four-year secondary school, with a heterogeneous population.

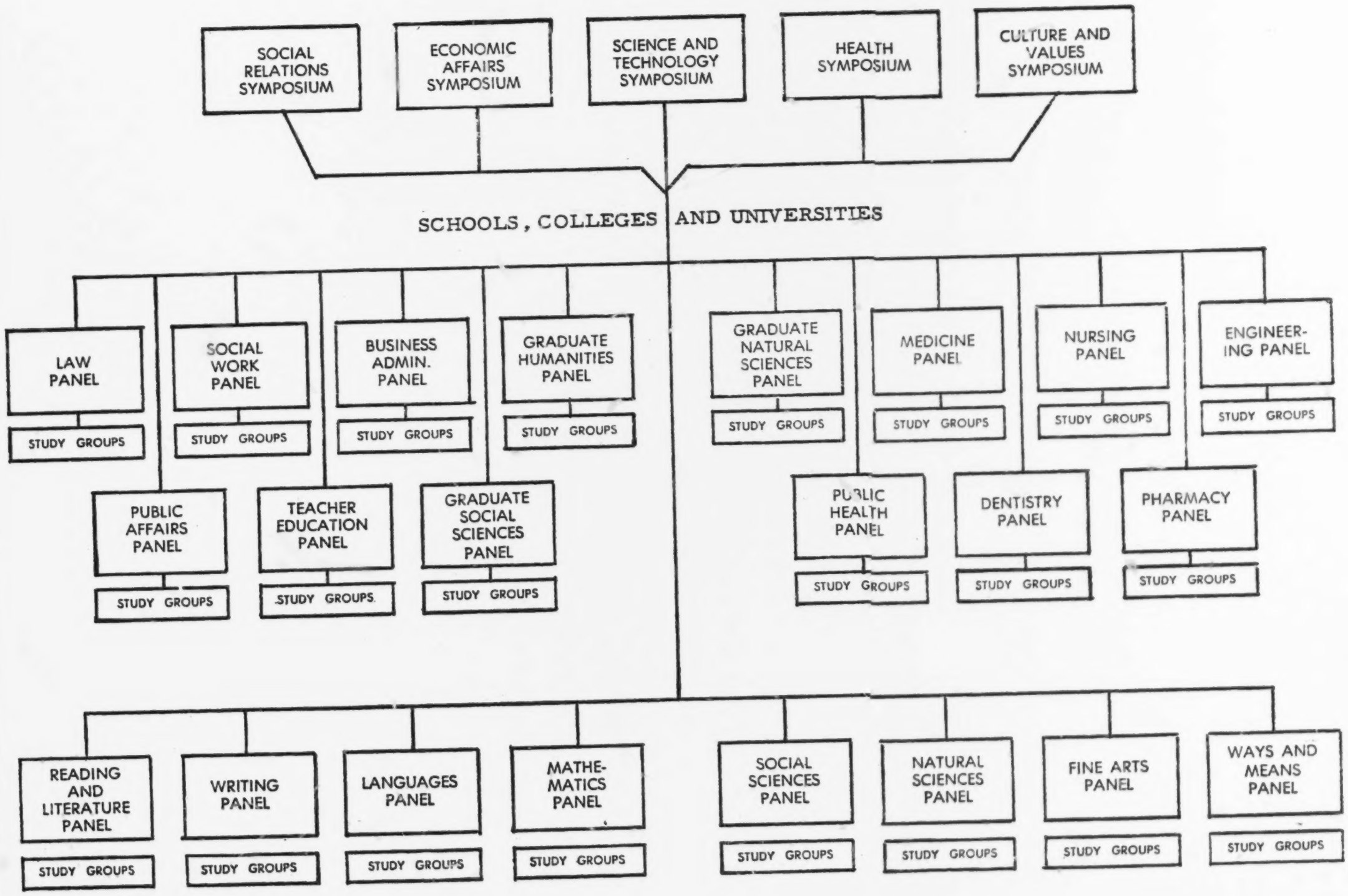
School of Liberal Arts, Graduate Faculty in the disciplines, and 14 undergraduate and graduate professional schools of the University of Pittsburgh, including the School of Education.

All these institutions are situated within a single campus area in the Oakland cultural center of the Pittsburgh metropolitan community. Educational television station WQED, Carnegie Institute Museum, Library and Art Galleries, Mellon Institute of Industrial Research, the Medical Center, the Pittsburgh Board of Education Building and many other cultural assets and research facilities are located within the shadow of the Cathedral of Learning. The Coordinated Education Center, therefore, has within close physical proximity a wealth of intellectual resources upon which to draw, as well as a great diversity of educational institutions in an extensive region with which to interact.

Most important, the Coordinated Education Center has the full support and commitment of the Pittsburgh Public School System and the University of Pittsburgh for continued cooperative action.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REGIONAL STUDY

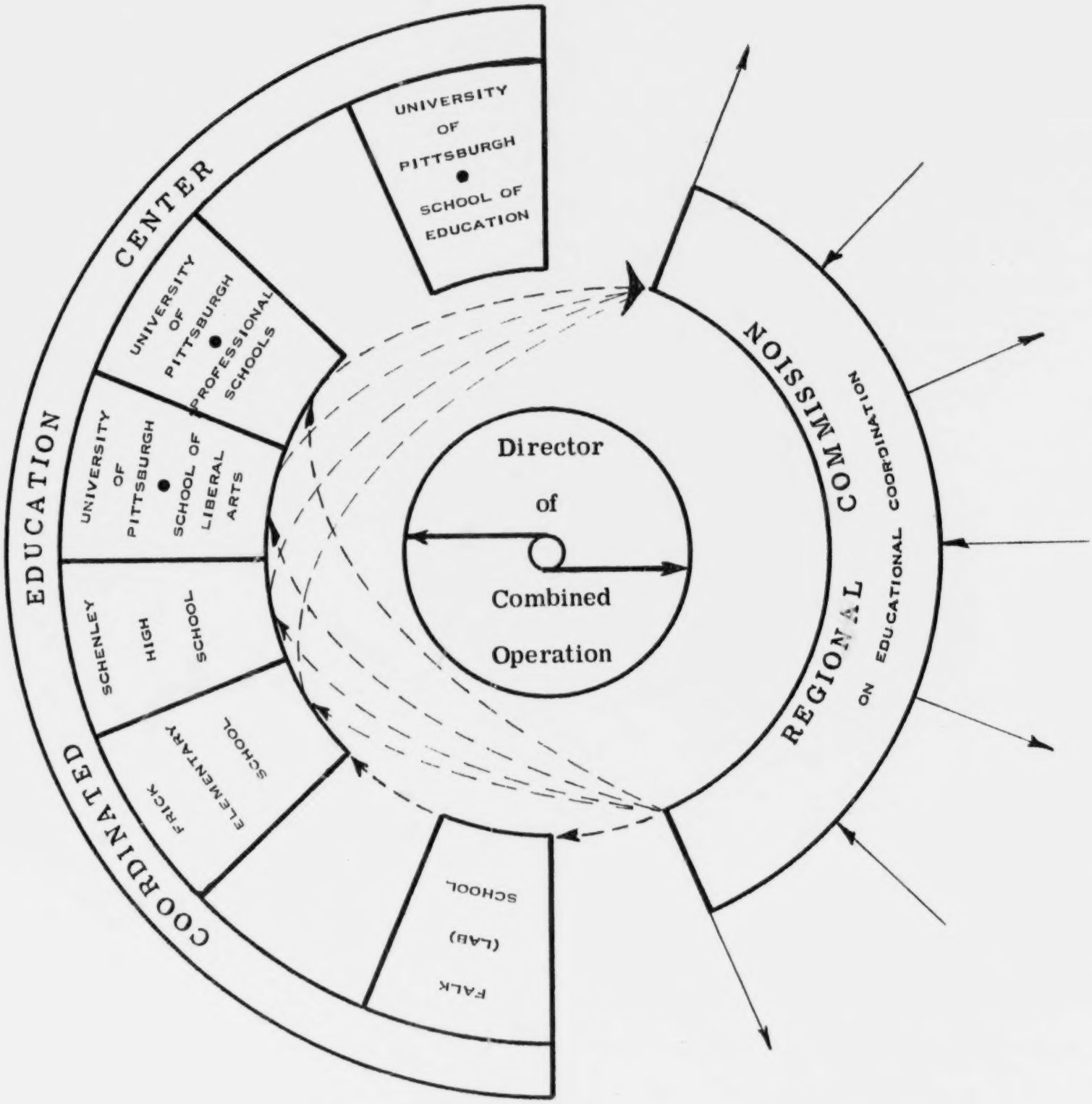
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP



THE COORDINATED EDUCATION CENTER

IN RELATION TO

THE REGIONAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL COORDINATION


COORDINATED EDUCATION CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS
SCHENLEY HIGH SCHOOL
FRICK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FALK SCHOOL (LAB)
Director of Combined Operation
REGIONAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL COORDINATION

What Has Been Done

The Coordinated Education Center's program is concerned with both the substance of what is taught and the setting within which education takes place, with both curriculum content and such matters as time, space, teaching tools, numbers of students and deployment of personnel. For tactical reaso · initial emphasis has been on curriculum and time use. These parts of the program seemed most readily to provide opportunities for the Center to engage in action persons from all the affiliated units and to afford insights for getting at the other matters.

Five curriculum development committees are at work in the fields of English, foreign languages, social sciences, mathematics and the natural sciences. Within the continuum concept, the committees are focusing first on the high school curriculum, bringing to bear on it the experience of scholars working on the frontiers of substantive knowledge as well as the insights of practicing teachers at the elementary, secondary and collegiate levels. Their objective is to develop curricula for sequential learning steps, consonant with the expanding body of new knowledge and challenging to the best efforts of able students. The curriculum work is being extended down through the elementary and up through the collegiate levels, as opportunities arise, in order to embrace the entire continuum.

The English Curriculum Committee has developed a new course outline which is in use in the ninth grade at Schenley High School and which has been adapted for a group of advanced eighth grade students at Falk School. An ungraded English course for talented students from the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades also is in operation at Schenley.

And in the University's School of Liberal Arts this year an experimental team-teaching approach is being used for 200 freshman, employing an unusually skillful teacher of English composition and making imaginative use of visual and aural aids.

The Foreign Language Curriculum Committee also has developed a new French course outline which is in use in the ninth grade at Schenley and which has been adapted for a group of advanced eighth grade students at Falk. Both Frick and Falk schools for several years have offered French in the elementary grades and students having this oral-aural experience soon will be reaching high school. The Committee has undertaken to solve this transition problem, aided by a new electronic language laboratory at Schenley which is to be staffed in part by advanced language students from the University.

The Social Sciences Committee is developing a history sequence designed to eliminate duplications and provide progressively greater analytical experience, eventuating in an advanced placement course for high school seniors. As a special project, a high school economics course is being developed for especially able students. At the University, a team-teaching experiment is under way with 350 students in the first year political science course, with 250 others as a control group. Other team-teaching experiments are under way in economics and other social science areas.

The Mathematics Committee, fortunate in having both a school and a college person widely acquainted with the experimental work at Illinois, Yale and elsewhere in this field, is developing a new high school geometry course as a first step toward a new mathematics sequence. The Committee's work builds upon several years experience with highly successful University institutes for public school teachers on the subject of the new mathematics.

The Natural Sciences Committee, which also builds upon considerable experience with University institutes for public school teachers, is developing high school science curricula that reflect new knowledge in the field and emphasize science as inquiry. The Committee chairman, who is a research associate in one of the University Medical Center laboratories, already has a group of 25 talented high school students carrying on original cancer research under his supervision in his and in the high school laboratories.

Although curriculum content has been emphasized in the early stage of the Coordinated Education Center's program development, some significant experimentation with the setting of education is under way, especially as regards more flexible use of time. The nature of the challenge facing modern education clearly calls for bold and imaginative efforts to make the most effective possible use of time. The Center, although concerned with the quality of education provided for all, recognizes that economical use of time has special relevance for those able young people who are most likely to progress through the educational continuum, if they are to enter upon productive professional careers while still in their most creative years.

The Center has helped institute an early admissions program at the University and has arranged for Schenley High School students to begin college work in subjects in which they are especially advanced. The early admissions program began in the Fall of 1959 with the enrollment as freshmen of 13 academically superior and socially mature students who had completed their junior year of high school. The experiment, which is to be expanded, is being evaluated by personnel of the University's Counseling Center. A small number of Schenley High School

students, who are not candidates for early admission to college but are nevertheless ready for college work in particular subjects, now can begin taking college courses for credit while completing their high school graduation requirements. The University is waiving all tuition and fee charges to encourage this experiment. Students in the Center's affiliated elementary schools also are enabled to pursue advanced study at Schenley High School in their particularly strong subjects. Advanced placement courses to be offered in the students' home schools are to be developed by the curriculum committees. The Center, therefore, will have a variety of acceleration patterns to fit variations in academic ability and social maturation.

The University is pioneering a radically new eleven-month trimester calendar which will permit students to complete a baccalaureate and a doctoral program in five years instead of seven. The trimester also offers the advantage of much greater flexibility for students who must take time off to work and will enable the University to accomodate a third more students with virtually the same plant. That the trimester calendar is both a bold and a promising departure from tradition to meet emerging needs has been widely acknowledged (see Saturday Review, September 12, 1959).

The University also is committed to the aim of providing all students with both a liberal education and professional training. It is vigorously exploring ways to integrate the two into a coherent whole, rather than one being superimposed on the other, and this will do further violence to traditional time-serving concepts of education.

Both the curriculum revision and the time-use experiments, which are to be continued, have underlined the need for further program development.

What Has To Be Developed

The Coordinated Education Center has reached a point where the realization of its full action potential requires a period of intensive program development. In order to undertake really bold and imaginative experimentation with the physical and organizational setting within which education takes place, the inter-relatedness of several factors must be carefully considered. In addition to time, these factors include space, tools, numbers of students and personnel. The specific program components dealing with each of these must be designed in relation to all the others. The scope of the developmental tasks has been clarified by the Center's experience thus far.

The space factor involves both imaginative adaptation of old structures and functional design of new ones. Installation this Fall of an electronic language laboratory at Schenley High School has illustrated the way a conventional building's limitations can be turned into positive advantages. Similar imagination must be devoted to overcoming the limitations of uniform, inflexible classroom size and arrangement. In new building design, the University has an excellent opportunity to pioneer in planning its professional schools center. An ingeneous method of linking physically the specialized libraries of the several professional schools with a central library facility already is being worked out. The University's new Schools of the Health Professions Building has been designed to provide common administrative and laboratory facilities. And both it and Clapp Hall, new home of the Natural Sciences Division, have been equipped with

television ducts. However, a concerted attack on the space-use problem for the whole range of educational institutions has yet to be mapped out.

New teaching-learning tools constitute another factor. Television has been used in a limited way by both the Pittsburgh Public Schools and the University, but with the excellent, two-channel facilities of WQED on campus, the Center sees an opportunity for major breakthroughs along a broad front through coordinated efforts. Television lends itself to the CEC's demonstration role in the region. The potential of TV as an administrative device, in addition to its use in teaching, needs further demonstration. Sharing of other physical facilities, such as laboratories and libraries, already is under way among the Center's affiliated institutions, but the ways of exploiting community resources, of which there is a concentration in the Center's neighborhood also ought to be demonstrated. A Psychology Department team now is working on teaching-machine design. Beyond that, the Center should serve as a clearing house for educational needs in order to draft specifications for technologically feasible new facilities and devices to be designed especially for educational use instead of adapted to it.

The factor of numbers of students is related in one way or another to all the others, to time, space, tools and personnel. The Center's curriculum content work already has bumped against the limitation imposed by traditional conceptions of uniform class size.

Several team-teaching experiments now under way have been mentioned. Use of specialists to train and to supplement self-contained classroom teachers in the French program is one way of providing for large numbers of students. The trimester calendar and other time conservation experiments are related to the problem of number. Still needed, however, is carefully evaluated action research and experimentation of optimuum class size for various age groups, ability groups, subjects and learning situations. Independent learning, at least for the able students with whom the Center is especially concerned, offers possibilities never yet systematically investigated throughout an educational continuum.

The factor of personnel preparation and deployment also is inter-related with all the other factors hitherto mentioned. The University's School of Education, the largest teacher training institution in the region, is an integral part of the CEC and long has had close working relationships with the Pittsburgh Public School System. The Center's research, experimentation and demonstration, therefore, can be geared directly into teacher preparation and in-service training programs. Furthermore, the School of Education, in a separate but related program, is proposing to experiment with new patterns for integrating liberal education and professional preparation. The existence of the Coordinated Education Center can add another dimension to the School of Education by serving it as a laboratory.

The Coordinated Education Center now is developing the specific components of a comprehensive program suggested by these examples, while it carries on the action program described in the preceding section.

Resources Committed

The character and scope of the program to be continued and developed makes the Coordinated Education Center an undertaking of significance not only to the schools, colleges and universities of the city and the region, but to education generally. This community, its educational institutions and individual educators have contributed generously in time, talent and financial resources to create the opportunity now at hand. The best assurance of the viability of the undertaking is the local investment already made in it. Specific grants, in the chronological order awarded, have included:

1. From the Buhl Foundation for expenses of the Regional Commission, including conference costs, office supplies, secretarial assistance, staff travel and publication.....$25,000

2. From the U. S. Steel Foundation for implementation of the University's trimester calendar.....$25,000

3. From the Pittsburgh Bicentennial Association for dinner assembly launching the Commission's study panels.....$ 2,108

4. From the Sarah Mellon Scaife Foundation for scholarship assistance for early admissions students.....$ 5,000

5. From the Buhl Foundation for Coordinated Education Center operations for six months, November 1, 1959, through April 30, 1960, including compensation for curriculum committees, some staff salaries, secretarial assistance, travel, consultants' fees and office supplies.....$40,000

Total Grants $97,108

From its own resources, the University of Pittsburgh has assigned a persons as full-time staff director of the Commission and the Center, has provided an office suite of five rooms, has supplied non-expendable equipment and has rendered numerous incidental services. The Pittsburgh Public School System, in addition to numerous incidental services, has contributed much staff and faculty time and the use of such facilities as the Schenley language laboratory. More than 80 top professional and civic leaders have participated in the Regional Commission's symposia and nearly 500 educators from eight universities, 25 colleges and about 50 schools and school systems are working on the study panels, all without compensation.

Not only will this sort of local investment continue, but it reflects the commitment of the community and its educational institutions eventually to absorb the cost of the Coordinated Education Center program in regular operating budgets. However, for a developmental period, ranging perhaps from five to ten years, supplementary support will be needed. The extent of that period and the total amount of supplementary support needed will be determined in the course of continuing and developing the Center's program over the next year and a half. The Center now is financed, however, only through April 30. Therefore, the University of Pittsburgh, with the endorsement of the Pittsburgh Public School System, is seeking immediate interim financial assistance in order to maintain the momentum of its action program and, simultaneously, to formulate the specific components of the more comprehensive five-to-ten-year program.